

WASHINGTON, DC – Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD) extended his congratulations today to Kacie Rader from Mechanicsville, MD, winner of the 70th Annual All American Soap Box Derby, held in Akron, OH on July 21. Kacie, who earned the right to compete after winning the 66th Greater Washington Soap Box Derby in June, is the first DC Soap Box Derby racer, and the first from the State of Maryland, to win the National Soap Box Derby title. For the last 17 years, Rep. Hoyer has sponsored a resolution to permit the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby to take place on the grounds of the United States Capitol and will offer a statement for the Congressional Record congratulating Kacie and all those who participated in the national competition.

“On behalf of Maryland’s Fifth Congressional District, I congratulate Kacie for winning the Masters Division of the Soap Box Derby Nationals and, in doing so, becoming the first racer from the region and the State of Maryland to earn this incredible achievement,” stated Rep. Hoyer. “As someone who is perennially involved in helping to ensure the running of the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby, it is particularly meaningful that this year’s national champion hails from Southern Maryland, and from my hometown no less.”

“After working so hard for so many years, this is a very sweet victory,” said Kacie Rader, who is still on the racing circuit this week at the National Derby Rally Championship in Muncie, IN. “I will never forget the moment I found out I won and how much it meant to share it with my family and friends.”

Miss Rader, who will be a senior at Chopticon High School this fall, competed in the top-level Masters Division against 63 other local champions from around the country. Masters cars are more complex and may be built with or without kits. Overall, the National Soap Box Derby event included the participation of a record 550 racers between the ages of eight and 17 from 183 cities in 43 states and 3 nations.

“I especially commend Kacie for her dedication and commitment to the sport that yielded her victory in the most difficult of divisions,” stated Rep. Hoyer. “Such an achievement does not come easily, but hard work pays off, and as a result Maryland and the Greater Washington Area can boast our first ever National Soap Box Derby Champion.”

Director of the Greater Washington D.C. Soap Box Derby Michael Harrigan, who attended this weekend’s Derby events, said, “I have watched Kacie grow up and develop as a racer and a person. She started racing when she was 7 years old and has been getting better over her last

8 years of racing in Soap Box Derby events. In the last year alone, Kacie raced in 40 Soap Box Derby events over 20 weekends in 6 different states. I knew that she was going to do well in last weekend's 70th All American Soap Box Derby after watching her first race of the day, which actually became the fastest run of any Masters Division racers in the history of the All American Soap Box Derby."

The origin of soap box derby racing dates back to 1934 when a photographer for the Dayton Daily News, Myron E. Scott, saw boys racing engineless cars down a hill, inspiring him to organize the first soap box derby competition. While the first derby race took place in Dayton, OH, in the following years, the venue moved to Akron, where the city's numerous hills proved to be better suited for racing. With the hard work of countless civic organizations, a permanent track site for the youth racing classic was created with the assistance of the Works Progress Administration (WPA).

Soap box derby racing in the Nation's Capital has a long and rich tradition as well. In 1938, Norman Rocca beat out 223 other racers to win the inaugural Greater Washington Soap Box Derby, which was held on New Hampshire Avenue. Over the years thousands of the region's young people have participated in this great race. The location has since moved from the original site on New Hampshire Avenue to Capitol Hill.

For more information see the All American Soap Box Derby website at www.aasbd.org or the Greater Washington, D.C. Soap Box Derby website at www.dcsoapboxderby.org

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